News release

19 April 2007

Contract win for Met Office/SITA weather system

Following a successful trial with winter flights into Afghanistan, Polet Airlines, the Russian global outsize airline, has announced the signing of a seven-year contract for the Met Office and SITA's Advanced Weather System.

Past recipient of a 'mission impossible' award from the European Institute of Air Transport Management, Polet Airlines has adopted the Advanced Weather Service because it strengthens the airline's competitive differentiator to 'fly anywhere'.

Anatoly Karpov, Polet Airlines CEO, said, "Our 'fly anywhere' policy can now be delivered to our customers with a greater level of predictability and confidence using the information provided by the Met Office and SITA. The improved agility this system provides will ensure more effective payload planning for cargo and that maximum take-off weights are optimised and costly diversions are avoided. This is a real deal winner for us and our customers".

During the trial period, Polet Airlines used the unique 5-day forecast to plan for flights into Kandahar in snow-swept southern Afghanistan where winter temperatures regularly drop below zero. This web-based application provides accurate views and predictions of critical weather conditions (visibility, temperature, pressure, wind and precipitation types) up to five days in advance, for anywhere around the world including non-airport locations if required.

These weather factors have a direct impact on an aircraft's take-off performance and can limit the aircraft's maximum allowable take-off weight. With this knowledge, Polet Airlines, unlike other cargo providers, could commit to carrying the required freight within an agreed schedule. Subsequent weather conditions proved the 100% accuracy of all the forecasts.

Polet Airlines has an outstanding reputation for flying outsize cargo into airports located in difficult terrain. Most recently it has won kudos for helping to fly a mock-up of the A380 around the world as part of an Airbus promotional campaign.

Doug Johnson, Head of Transport Business Unit at the Met Office said, "Extending prediction capabilities beyond current 24-hour weather forecasts allows airlines to take decisions earlier and improve turnaround times when weather has an impact."

Toby Tucker, SITA Director of Flight Operations, said, "Within a very short trial period, Polet Airlines saw the advantages this unique service could deliver to the business and quickly became SITA's launch customer. We anticipate that many airlines will want to benefit from the competitive edge of an accurate five-day outlook on any airport or location that affects their operations."

Around 250 aircraft operators rely on the SITA Flight Briefing Service to equip their pilots with cost-effective flight plans and weather briefings. More than 10,000 flight plans are produced each day, equating to around 3.5 million a year. SITA also provides in excess of 50 million weather and aeronautical briefing documents each year to support the economical and safe operation of its customer aircraft.

More information about services to aviation

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